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Neo-Cons Declare War on Russia

Israeli Lobby Targeting Putin As New 'Enemy'

By Michael Collins Piper

America's neoconservative elite and their collaborators in the pro-Israel lobby in Washington have fired a first shot in the opening guns of a new Cold War being launched against Russian Premier Vladimir Putin.

Although it hasn't been reported widely in the America mass media, Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Joe Lieberman (DConn.), two of the Israeli lobby's leading congressional stalwarts, introduced a resolution in the Senate on Feb. 19, condemning Putin and urging President Bush to push for suspending Russia's membership in the G-8 organization of industrial nations.

Latching on to the president's emphatic declaration in his Jan. 20 inaugural address of a new global campaign by the United States for the promotion of "democracy." Lieberman announced that "President Putin's assault on democracy in Russia violates the spirit of the industrialized democracies and the letter of Russia's obligations to the Group of Eight. We must openly confront anti-democratic backsliding in Russia for the sake of all those who look to the United States as a beacon for freedom."

The resolution was designed to put Bush on the spot just as he was meeting with Putin in Slovakia on Feb. 24.

The motive for the neo-conservatives and their congressional spokesmen to undermine Putin is clear: Putin recently challenged Bush and Israel by daring to say publicly that he (Putin) does not believe that Iran is seeking to build nuclear weapons.

Although the burgeoning hostility against Putin by the neo-conservatives has been widely hashed over in small-circulation pro-Israel publications and American Jewish community newspapers on a regular basis, it has only been recently that mainstream publications such as ***The Washington Post*** and ***The New York Times*** have begun to echo those concerns about Putin. It is almost as if the big name dailies were taking the lead from the other journals. Increasingly, however, the word that "Putin is a possible enemy" is now being preached to the average American through the outlets of the mass media.

Though Russia joined the G-8, which includes Britain, Canada, Japan, France, Italy and Germany, in 2002, the companion resolutions in the Senate and the House ask the president to enlist the other G-8 countries to join with the United States in suspending Russia's membership until such time as Bush decides that Russia is supposedly committed to so-called "democratic principles."

This is the second time that McCain and Lieberman introduced such a measure, although their last effort, in 2003, failed in committee. At that time, two other members of Congress, California Reps. Tom Lantos — a Democrat — and Christopher Cox — a Republican — introduced a companion resolution in the House which reached the floor but was never voted upon.

Reflecting on the fact that the media was increasingly promoting hostility to Putin, ***American Free Press*** noted on Oct. 25, 2004, that the media's primary concern about Putin stems from the fact that he has been moving against the handful of billionaire plutocrats in Russia who grabbed control of the Russian economy with the open-connivance of then- Russian leader Boris Yeltsin, following the collapse of the old Soviet Union. Many of these oligarchs also held Israeli citizenship.

One American hard-line pro-Israel publication, ***The New Republic***, raised the question on Sept. 24, 2004: "Is Russia going fascist?" asserting that whether Putin personally remains in power or not, there is a growing movement "nationalist" in nature — that holds great sway among the Russian population. TNR expressed concern that "a fascist revolution" could be in the offing, meaning a movement hostile to the Israeli oligarchs, with international criminal connections, who rule the Russian economy.

Likewise, much earlier, in his 1995 book, ***Russia: A Return to Imperialism***, Boston-University-based Israeli academic Uri Ra'anan sounded the concern that post-Soviet Russia may pose a threat to the West.

These works echo such writers as Jonathon Brent and Vladimir Naumov who, in their 2003 book, ***Stalin's Last Crime,*** published evidence that longtime Soviet leader Josef Stalin was almost certainly murdered in 1953 after he began moves toward exorcising Zionist influence in Soviet circles of power. They concluded by saying that "Stalin is a perpetual possibility," leaving open the theoretical proposition that Putin, or other would-be Russian leaders, may ultimately emerge as heir to Stalin's anti-Zionist legacy.

With the American neo-conservatives, whose ideological godfathers are widely known as admitted ex-Trotskyite communists, now moving against Putin, it is as if we are seeing a rejuvenation of the war against Russian nationalism by the Trotskyites, retooled for 21st century geopolitical considerations. Now — unlike in the first half of the 20th century prior to the founding of the state of Israel — the central role of that Middle East state in the neo-conservative worldview cannot be understated, for the concern about Israel is a front-line consideration in the neo-conservative campaign against Putin.

Illustration: Photographof Vladimir Putin. Caption: **"PUTIN PUMMELED:** Because he has been working to break the back of powerful Israeli oligarchs in Russia and has refused to support U.S. efforts to undermine Iran, a roadblock in Israel's design for Middle East dominance, Vladimir Putin is increasingly under attack by the U.S. media. Now the neo-cons are rallying to undermine him. Stay tuned."

A journalist specializing in media critique, Michael Collins Piper is the author of ***Final Judgment***, the controversial "underground bestseller" documenting the collaboration of Israeli intelligence in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He is also the author of ***The High Priests of War***, ***The New Jerusalem***, ***The Judas Goats***, and ***Dirty Secrets***, all available from America First Books and First Amendment Books. He has lectured on suppressed topics in places as diverse as Malaysia, Japan, Canada, Russia and Abu Dhabi.

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